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Security Council

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Letter dated 25 May 2006 addressed to the President of the Security Council from the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to my letter dated 22 March 2006 (S/2006/184) concerning the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). In that connection, I wish to follow up on my reports to the Security Council on UNOCI dated 3 January 2006 (S/2006/2) and 11 April 2006 (S/2006/222), in which I recommended that the Council should approve an increase in the Operation's strength by four battalions, three formed police units and 100 police officers in order to enhance the Operation's capacity to protect itself and effectively to support the implementation of the tasks provided for under the peace agreements, which are critical to the organization of the elections in October 2006.

In its resolution 1667 (2006) of 31 March 2006, the Security Council took note of my letter of 22 March and expressed its determination to review the tasks and troop levels of UNOCI by the end of April 2006, with a view to a decision on its reinforcement. In the same resolution, the Council reaffirmed its intention to authorize me to redeploy troops between the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and UNOCI on a temporary basis in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1609 (2005), as might be needed. I have noted with satisfaction the support expressed for my recommendations by most members of the Council during their recent consultations on Côte d'Ivoire, and I am aware that the Council remains actively seized of the matter.

In this regard, I wish to bring to the attention of the Security Council the latest developments in Côte d'Ivoire, which call for the urgent reinforcement of UNOCI to the levels indicated in my above-mentioned reports. On 18 May last, the Prime Minister, Charles Konan Banny, launched on a trial basis the delicate process of identification of the populations in seven zones spread across the territory of Côte d'Ivoire. The arrangements for the pre-regroupment of the troops of the Forces nouvelles and the Forces armeés nationales de Côte d'Ivoire should be finalized shortly. The "pilot project", which began on 18 May, should lead to the implementation throughout the national territory of Côte d'Ivoire of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme as well as to the identification of populations and preparation of electoral lists.

In the light of these important developments and given the very short period remaining before the date set for the elections, it is crucial for UNOCI to be adequately reinforced in a timely manner, to enable it effectively to fulfil its mandate in support of the delicate processes of identification and disarmament. I

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therefore appeal to the Security Council to expedite its decision on the recommendations for the strengthening of UNOCI.

I should be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**